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PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re the Application of

Naomasa SHIRAISHI

Group Art Unit: 1756

Application No.: 09/869,121

Examiner: S. Mohamedulla

Filed: October 15, 2001

Docket No.: 109919

For: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR PRODUCING MASK

RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT**RECEIVED**

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

OCT 20 2003**TC 1700**

Sir:

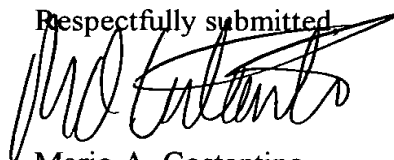
In reply to the September 29, 2003 Restriction Requirement, Applicant hereby elects Group I, claims 1-8, 11 and 13-18. The election is made with traverse.

It is respectfully submitted that the subject matter of all pending claims is sufficiently related that a thorough search for the subject matter of any one Group of claims would encompass a search for the subject matter of the remaining claims. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the search and examination of the entire application could be made without serious burden. See MPEP §803 in which it is stated that "if the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions". It is respectfully submitted that this policy should apply in the present application in order to avoid unnecessary delay and expense to Applicant, and duplicative examination by the Patent Office.

Thus, withdrawal of the Restriction Requirement is respectfully requested.

In addition, the Examiner is requested to consider the references submitted with an Information Disclosure Statement on October 22, 2001. The Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below if, for some reason, a copy of the October 22, 2001 Information Disclosure Statement is not present in the Patent Office file.

Respectfully submitted,



Mario A. Costantino
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MAC/ccs

Date: October 14, 2003

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